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Message Text

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46
ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /031 W
---------- 102580
P 270800Z MAR 74
FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6116

S E C R E T TANANARIVE 0399

EXDIS

E. O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: TSPA, MA, US
SUBJ: NASA STATION NEGOTIATIONS

REFS: TANANARIVE 0327 AND 0368

BEGIN SUMMARY: I BELIEVE WE CAN NOW VIRTUALLY TAKE AS AGREED BY GOMR THAT NASA STATION AGREEMENT WILL BE EXTENDED FOR THREE YEARS. THIS INFO MUST BE EXTREMELY CLOSELY HELD AS LEAKS TO MALAGASY OFFICALS LIKE FONMIN RATSIRAKA OR MALAGASY AMB TO U.S. COULD UPSET FAVORABLE COURSE NEGOTIATIONS TAKING. NASA SHOULD, UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES, LEAVE IN PLACE IN MADAGASCAR SPECIAL EQUIP FOR TRACKING WEATHER SATELLITES. END SUMMARY.

1. IN MY CALL ON MIN TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT GEN ANDRIAMAHAZO 26MAR, HE TOLD ME HE HAD DISCUSSED NASA STATION AGREEMENT WITH HEAD OF GOVT GEN RAMANANTSOA WHO APPEARS POLITICALLY PREPARED AGREE TO RETENTION OF NASA STATION. HE SAID RAMANANTSOA ASKED WHETHER U.S. COULD NOT DO BETTER ON RENT. I THEREFORE RAISED ANNUAL RENTAL FIGURE FOR PERIOD STARTING 1973 TO $100,000 ANNUALLY. I MADE CLEAR THIS IS FINAL LIMIT TO WHICH NASA CAN GO.

2. ANDRIAMAHAZO ALSO ASKED FOR OUTLINE OF PROGRAM DESIGNED ACHIEVE MALAGASIZATION OF STATION. SINCE HE CONSIDERS THIS ESSENTIAL ELEMENT IN GETTING FINAL APPROVAL OF STATION AGREEMENT EXTENSION OUT OF GEN RAMANANTSOA, I AM GIVING HIM TIME-PHASED PROGRAM FOR TRAINING MALAGASY AND FOR REDUCING BENDIX PERSONNEL. SINCE THIS PROGRAM DOES NOT YET HAVE FINAL NASA APPROVAL, I AM MAKING CLEAR THAT IT IS PROV-
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ISIONAL PROGRAM WHICH COULD BE SUBJECT TO SOME CHANGES.

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3. ANDRIAMAHAZO ALSO RAISED CERTAIN CONCERNS OVER BENDIX WHICH I THINK CAN BE LEFT FOR RESOLUTION AT TECHNICAL LEVEL:

(A) CHOICE BY NASA AND GOMR (I.E., PTT), NOT BY BENDIX, OF MALAGASY PERSONNEL WHO WILL RECEIVE TRAINING IN U.S. AND

(B) USE OF NASA, NOT BENDIX, PERSONNEL TO PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ROLE IF AND AS REQUIRED AFTER FULL MALAGASIZATION OF STATION. IN MY PRESENCE, ANDRIAMAHAZO LEAFED THROUGH WHAT HE CALLED "INTELLIGENCE" GATHERED BY MALAGASY, INDICATING DISSATISFACTION WITH BENDIX IN OTHER COUNTRIES.

4. ANDRIAMAHAZO INSISTENT THAT INFO ON NASA STATION NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN HIM AND ME AND THEIR STATUS BE HELD IN UTMOST SECRECY. HE SAID IT ESSENTIAL THAT DECISION ON NASA STATION AGREEMENT BE COMMUNICATED TO RATSIRAKA ONLY BY GEN RAMANANTSOA. THUS, NO WORD SHOULD LEAK TO RATSIRAKA FROM U.S. SIDE. HE EQUALLY INSISTENT THAT NOW WORD BE BREATHED TO MALAGASY AMB IN WASH.

5. WITHIN THIS EMBASSY I AM RESTRICTING INFO TO MYSELF, DCM, AND NASA STATION DIRECTOR. I HAVE ASKED LATTER TO MAKE NO MENTION WHATSOEVER OF MATTER OVER TELEPHONE, AND REQUEST THAT NASA AND GODDARD SPACE CENTER LIKEWISE REFRAIN FROM RAISING MATTER, EVEN IN INDIRECT MANNER, VIA TELEPHONE WHICH MAY WELL BE TAPPED.

6. UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES, NASA APPEARS TO BE SAFE IN LEAVING IN PLACE IN MADAGASCAR SPECIAL EQUIPMENT FOR TRACING SERIES METEOROLOGICAL SATELLITE LAUNCHINGS. WOULD BE MOST UNWISE IN ANY CASE TO ENGAGE IN ANY ACTION AT THIS STAGE WHICH SUGGESTED THAT EQUIP TO BE MOVED.

MENDENHALL

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